

William Beall Carrell, MD (1883–1944)

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ABSTRACT

This article commemorates Dr. William Beall Carrell, who made many contributions to the field of orthopedic surgery. His legacy continues through the Carrell Clinic and Scottish Rite for Children in Dallas.

KEYWORDS Adolescents; history; leadership; orthopedic surgery; pediatrics; remembrance

Dr. William Beall (W. B.) Carrell (*Figure 1*) was born in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, on December 21, 1883. He grew up in Texas after moving there as a young boy. William B. Carrell attended Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. After receiving his bachelor's degree in 1905, he married Beulah Stewart of Dallas the same year. He then earned his medical degree from Southwestern Medical School in Dallas in 1908 and completed his internship at St. Paul's Sanatorium in 1910.¹

Dr. Carrell joined the US Army Medical Corp in December 1917 following the US entrance into World War I. He completed assignments in Oklahoma City, New Orleans, Houston, Washington, DC, France, England, and New York City. He resigned from the Army in 1919 with the rank of major.²

After returning from his military service, Dr. Carrell focused his career on orthopedic surgery, becoming one of Dallas's first orthopedic surgeons (*Figure 2*). Throughout his career, he was interested in caring for and treating children—particularly underserved and crippled children. W. B. Carrell was instrumental in the passage of legislation that provided care for indigent children within the state of Texas. Specifically, he was a pioneer in pushing legislation for victims of infantile paralysis primarily caused by polio. Due to his passion for children and efforts to treat them, he was approached by Texas Masons, who also recognized a growing need to care for children with polio, to open a facility to treat these children regardless of their financial capacity to pay for treatment. This led to the formation of Scottish Rite for Children (formerly the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for

Crippled Children), which opened its doors in Dallas, Texas, in 1921. W. B. Carrell served as the first chief surgeon, volunteering his time away from his primary practice.^{3,4}

Dr. Carrell was one of the founding members of the Texas Society for Crippled Children and the Carrell-Girard Orthopedic Clinic—where much of his clinical practice was based. He was heavily involved in the education and training of young orthopedic surgeons, serving as a faculty member at the Baylor University School of Medicine in Dallas. Additionally, he served as an orthopedic surgeon for Methodist, Parkland, and Baylor hospitals in Dallas. W. B. Carrell had two sons and a daughter. His older son,



Figure 1. Dr. William B. Carrell.

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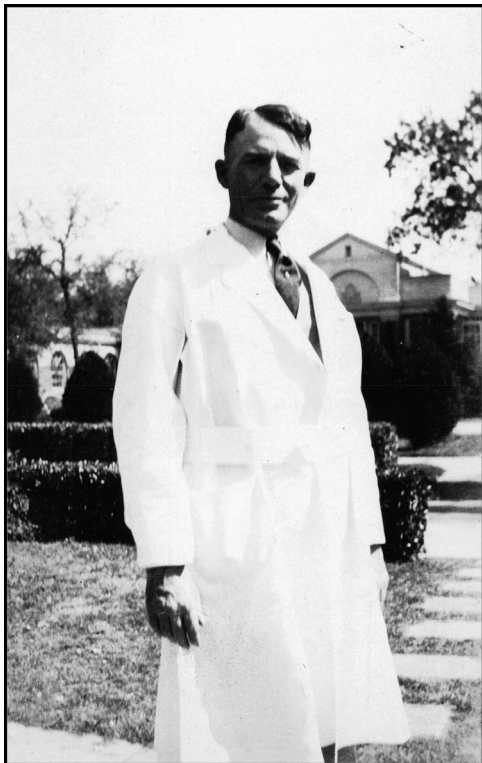


Figure 2. Dr. W. B. Carrell as a young physician after returning home from his military service.

Dr. Brandon Carrell, also became an influential orthopedic surgeon in Dallas and joined him in practice.

W. B. Carrell was recognized not only for his humanitarian efforts, but also for his contributions to the medical literature, especially related to crippled children. In his later years, he became interested in the work of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis and devoted much of his

time and research to projects sponsored by the foundation, where he served on the orthopedic board.

Dr. Carrell was recognized as a man of great kindness and high ideals and was beloved by a host of friends and family. In 1925, he received the Linz Award, a prestigious award given to influential and outstanding service for Dallas citizens. He died on February 26, 1944, at the age of 60.

The legacy of Dr. Carrell lives on throughout the health care community of Dallas. The Carrell Clinic continues to deliver patient care, and the Scottish Rite for Children continues to serve a large population of pediatric patients with orthopedic needs.

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